es and Warden Prison Philosophy

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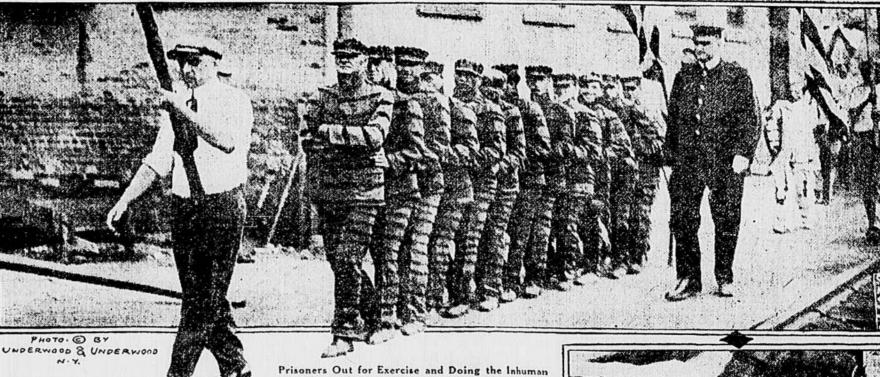
The remedy is at hand.

The older systems have failed. There are approximately 5,000 men serving sentences in State prisons in New York to-day. Of these, 3,000 are serving second. third and even fourth terms. Obviously, if sixty per cent of our prisoners are not bettered by jail, something is wrong with the jail.

"The old systems failed because the problem of crime is primarily neither a mental nor a physical problem, but a moral one. No man can be reformed except his conscience be quickened; unless there be established, either consciously or unconsciously, natural and healthy relations between the criminal and society, between the sinner and God. The successful prison system must approach the problem from the spiritual side; aiming to solve it by making men

"The Mutual Welfare League-the prisoners' own organization-having its origin in the suggestion of a convict and formulated and put in practise by the inmates of Auburn prison in the Winter of 1913-14, is simply a piece of social machinery, its peculiar form determined by local conditions, intended to produce a certain result; and that result is the sending of men at the end of their terms back into society in a spirit not of revengeful destruction, but of sympathetic co-operation.

"The Mutual Welfare League is composed of all the



A Frequent Sing Sing Yard Scene Before Warden Osborne Took Charge

Lock-Step That Through Years of Practice Fastened a Betraying Habit of Gait Upon Them. This Group Formed Part of the Welcoming Parade That Greeted the Warden. It Shows the Difference Between the Old System and the New.

prisoners in the institution-except those in the condemned cells. This membership is forfeited for bad conduct, according to the decision of the courts established by the league. The objects of the league are to promote in every way the true interests and welfare of the men confined in the prison. The motto is concise and explicit: 'Do good-Make good.' The colors are green and white, emblematic of Hope and Truth. The governing body of the league is a board of delegates elected every six months. The delegates select an executive board from among their number, to which is intrusted the administration of the league. The executive board appoints a clerk and a sergeant-at-arms, who is empowered to add as many assistant sergeants-at-arms as necessary, the delegates acting in that capacity. The duties of the sergeant at arms are exactly what their name signifies— they are the officers appointed to see that the men understand the rules; they are responsible for the reporting of any infraction of the rules established by the men themselves. But men who believe themselves unjustly treated may take their complaints directly to the League Court, composed of members of the delegates, who hear and determine all complaints, disputes and infractions of the local laws.

How the Work of Reform and Human Reclamation Proceeds

"In Sing Sing there are two courts, the Welfare Court and the Warden's Court. The cases range from petty infractions to cases of assault. The Welfare Court usually punishes by depriving a man of mem-bership from a day to much longer. The court refers

more serious cases to the Warden's Court.
"The men rise at seven and march to breakfast, after the buckets are emptied. Their breakfast is at tables on which they find their knives, forks, spoons, cups and plates. They are served by men who are selected for waiters. After they have finished eating (conversation is permitted at all times) they have usually a half hour for smoking and light recreation. At eight they go to the various factories and mills. At twelve they are through and have dinner. Owing to the large number of men and the small size of the mess hall at Sing Sing, the men dine in groups. After dinner there is time for a little rest and recreation, and they go Work lasts from one to four. From four to six the men have time for recreation—ball playing or a swim in the swimming pool, which is also equipped with showers. At six the men go in to supper. After supper they go to their cells, fetching their buckets and making preparation for their arious vocational and other classes, which last from half-past six to about eight. All entertainments, meetings of the league, conferences, and so forth, take place between eight and ten. At ten the men return to their cells. At half-past ten "lights out." In spe cial instances, for study and so forth, men are permitted to burn their lights a little later. one period of the day are the men supposed to preserve silence, and that is on the march from supper to the

There are no guards in the mess hall to-day. where three years ago there were sixty or seventy. There is no stealing from the mess hall of utensils which are now left on the table instead of being deposted under the watchful eye of a guard in boxes.

'Under the Mutual Welfare League the tendency is for each individual to be rated as he deserves, and to get the peculiar medicine be happens to need. Of course, in practical workings, there are failures and maladjustments. We do not get perfect government nor perfect relations between the individuals in Jail any more than it obtains outside prison walls. Yet, in spite of all, it works.

"One's natural prejudices would lead one to form a theory that of all men the convicted criminals of a prison are unfitted for even the smallest amount of self-government. Yet the facts are otherwise; for we have given to large bodies of them a considerable measure of self-government and the thing works. "In the matter of physical health no doctor's reports

are necessary. The very appearance of the men speaks for itself. The slouching gait is gone, the prison pallor is gone, the hunted look in the face and the restless eyes are gone. The prisoners do not crave the drugs. The daily recereation, the baseball and swimming, the freedom of conversation, the general relaxation from the severe old rigidity has brought about a totally different physical condition. When a man comes out of these prisons now he is able physically to do his share of the world's work.

"The improved physical condition is accompanied by an improved mental condition. The politics of the League, the hearings before the courts, give valuable exercise always to mind, as well as sometimes to in lungs. It is really true, in many cases, that men are Onondaga too busy and interested to plan escape or to let their minds dwell upon evil.

"It is, however, the moral improvement that is the most wonderful thing of all. The very standards of conduct have undergone reconstruction. One of the Chains men, as he was about to leave Sing Sing, came to say good-bye to the warden.

Prison.

Were

Night

"'Do you realize what it is the League has done here?' said he. 'Let me tell you. It has started the men discussing the right and wrong of things, every day, from one end of the yard to the other.'

Therein lies precisely that exercise of consciencejust that practice in discrimination between right and wrong, between wise and foolish, that is necessary and desirable for all men; and especially for those have committed sin and need to cleanse their Attempted souls and patiently form new standards.

"As the criminal looks at society he sees what he calls 'graft' everywhere; corruption in police; corruption in politics; corruption everywhere. He finds corruption inside the prison as well as outside. He some times feels himself a helpless unit in a gigantic scheme of corruption, alongside of which his own crime seems like a mere piece of boy's play. I do not say that this is even approximately correct; I only state it as the prisoner's point of view.

"The aim of the Welfare League is to remove that esentment. We do not coddle the prisoners. The Welfare League system aims to train him in natural and law-abiding habits; teaching him how to use rather than abuse his liberty.

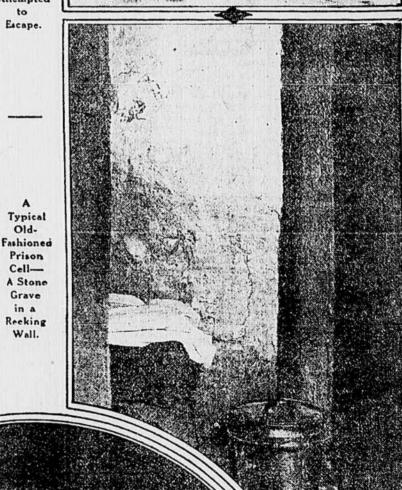
There is no intention of making prison pleasant No prison can ever be made so. There can be nothing pleasant about the denial of liberty. No one proposes to make the prisons abodes of luxury or to give the prisoners any privileges that do not bear directly upon their preparation for returning to society. If you want the good results which come from bearing responsibility you must be prepared to grant the responsibility.

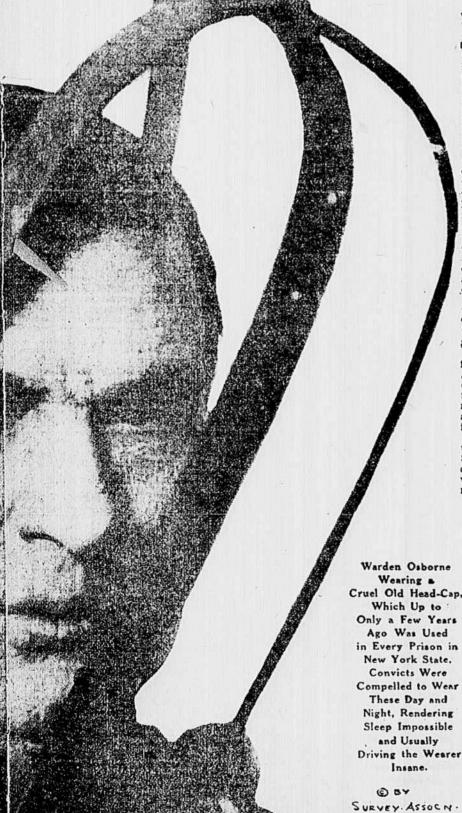
"As for the matter of reforming prisoners, let us bear in mind that he who asserts the impossibility of reform in any man forgets history and denies re-ligion. Nothing can be clearer, as a matter of human record, than the enormous capacity of man to recover normal balance after the commission Nothing can be clearer, as a matter of religion, than the readiness of God to forgive.

"It is our duty, as Americans, to learn to apply the great underlying principles of democracy to all social problems: the family, the school and college, factory-and even the prison.

'The Welfare system means a training in democracy, it means applied Christianity-for it is a practical effort to operate the prisons on the basis of the Golden Rule; and it works."

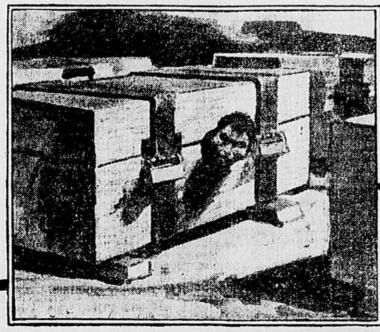






INC.

Chinese Equivalent of the "Cooler"-Boxes in Which Condemned Political Prisoners Are Fastened Until They Die



The Only Picture Ever Taken of a "Cooler." These Are the Underground Cells for Solitary Confinement. The Vault Is Lined With Steel. The Dungeons Are Seen Opening Up on Either Side.
There Is No Furniture
at All in These Places and the Convicts Sleep on the Steel-Riveted Floors.